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TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SF, PO, US

SUBJECT: TAD SZULC ARTICLE

1. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE BY TAD SZULC APPEARED IN WASHINGTON POST, MAY 2:

QUOTE A NEW BEGINNING FOR PORTUGAL: "PORTUGAL'S MILITARY COUP D'ETAT OF APRIL 25 HAS PRODUCED SOME OF THE MOST ENCOURAGING NEWS IN QUITE A FEW YEARS FOR THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM IN THE WORLD.

"AT A TIME WHEN NEW REPRESSIVE DICTATORSHIPS ARE SPROUTING ELSEWHERE AND THE OLD ONES ARE BECOMING MORE FROZEN, THE PORTUGUESE JUNTA SUCCEEDED IN OVERTHROWING THE WORLD'S
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MOST DURABLE DICTATORSHIP THIS SIDE OF THE SOVIET UNION

AND, HOPEFULLY SETTING THE PENINSULAR COUNTRY ON THE ROAD TO DEMOCRACY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 46 YEARS.

"AND WHILE NEO-COLONIALIST AND "WHITE RULE" TENDENCIES WERE REASSERTING THEMSELVES IN MUCH OF AFRICA THE LISBON JUNTA'S ACTION CARRIED THE PROMISE THAT THE LONG AND BLOODY COLONIAL WAR IN ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE AND PORTUGUESE GUINEA MAY FINALLY FIND A PEACEFUL AND RATIONAL SOLUTION.

"YET, IN EJECTING THE CAETANO DICTATORSHIP -- ESSENTIALLY A COMBINATION OF EXTREME RIGHTIST POLITICS SUPPORTED BY A

CRUELLY EFFICIENT SECRET POLICE AND POWERFUL ECONOMIC GROUPS DRAWING THEIR WEIGHT FROM THE WEALTH OF THE AFRICAN COLONIES - GENERAL ANTONIO DE SPINOLA, THE JUNTA CHIEF, HAS SET IN MOTION NEW AND CONTRADICTIONARY FORCES THAT STILL LEAVE MUCH OF THE FUTURE IN DOUBT.

"IF THERE IS A VALID PRECEDENT FOR THE SPINOLA COUP, IT IS GENERAL DE GAULLE'S RETURN TO POWER IN 1958, SIGNALING THE END OF THE ALGERIAN WAR AND THE START OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE REBELS THAT LED TO ALGERIA'S INDEPENDENCE. AT FIRST SIGHT, THERE IS A CERTAIN PARALLEL BETWEEN THE CONDITIONS THAT MOVED DE GAULLE AND 16 YEARS LATER, SPINOLA TO TAKE NATIONAL MATTERS IN THEIR OWN HANDS. BOTH METROPOLITAN NATIONS WERE EXHAUSTED AND EMBITTERED BY LENGTHY COLONIAL WARS, AND INTERNAL UNREST WAS GROWING. BOTH DE GAULLE AND SPINOLA CONCLUDED THAT MILITARY VICTORY WAS IMPOSSIBLE AND THAT NEW ANSWERS WERE REQUIRED.

"BUT THIS IS WHERE THE SIMILARITIES END.

"DE GAULLE'S BASIC PROBLEM WAS TO WIN AT HOME (AND AMONG ALGERIA'S FRENCH "COLONS") THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE INEVITABILITY OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT LARGELY ON THE ALGERIANS' TERMS. TO BE SURE, HE HAD TO ENDURE FOR AWHILE THE MENACE OF MILITARY COUNTER-COUPS AND THE TERRORISM OF THE OAS (SECRET ARMY ORGANIZATION). BUT HE WAS SPARED THE TRAUMA OF TRANSFORMING A NATION FROM A PRIMITIVE DICTATORSHIP INTO A REASONABLY FUNCTIONING DEMOCRACY WHEN HATREDS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND FRUSTRATIONS BOTTLED UP FOR NEARLY A HALF-CENTURY WERE SURGING TO THE FORE. THIS, OF COURSE, IS GENERAL SPINOLA'S PRIMARY TASK.

"FURTHERMORE, DE GAULLE'S DECISION TO MAKE PEACE IN ALGERIA WAS CHIEFLY A FRENCH AFFAIR. SPINOLA, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS CREATED A SITUATION IN WHICH OTHER INTERESTS THAN THOSE OF PORTUGAL AND THE AFRICAN NATIONAL-

ISTS GUERRILLAS ARE INVOLVED. WHAT HAPPENED IN LISBON ON APRIL 25, AFFECTS DEEPLY THE IMMEDIATE NATIONAL SECURITY OF SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA, AS THEIR GOVERNMENTS PERCEIVE IT, AS WELL AS THE WHOLE BALANCE OF POWER IN SUBSAHARA AFRICA.

"THE UPHEAVAL IN LISBON IS ALSO OF CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES AND SOME OF ITS ALLIES IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION. ONE FEAR IS THAT THE ULTIMATE ESTABLISHMENT OF UNFRIENDLY BLACK REGIMES IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA, A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY IN TIME, MAY THREATEN SOUTH AFRICA'S STABILITY AND ENDANGER THE SEA LANES AROUND THE CAPE AND

TO THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA WHO HAVE LONG SUPPORTED THE REBELS, NOTABLY FRELIMO IN MOZAMBIQUE, HAVE A STAKE IN THE OUTCOME AS WELL. AMONG THE FEARS IS THAT LACK OF ACCESS TO SOUTHERN AFRICA MAY DEPRIVE THE U.S. AND NATO COUNTRIES OF RAW MATERIALS, RANGING FROM URANIUM AND OTHER STRATEGIC METALS TO GOLD.

"AS LONG AS A YEAR AGO WHEN IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THE REBELS WERE GAINING IN STRENGTH IN MOZAMBIQUE, THE U.S. AND NATO BEGAN TO DRAW UP SECRET CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR AIR AND NAVAL DEFENSE OF SOUTH AFRICA. IN JUNE, 1973, NATO'S DEFENSE PLANNING COMMITTEE (DPC) INSTRUCTED SACLANT (SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, ATLANTIC) HEADQUARTERS IN NORFOLK, VA. TO DRAW UP PLANS FOR AN ALLIED AIR-NAVAL TASK FORCE TO STAND READY TO ASSIST SOUTH AFRICA, SHOULD THE NEED ARISE.

"THIS WAS PART OF BROADER UNITED STATES STRATEGY AS VISUALIZED AT THE PENTAGON, TO REINFORCE POSITIONS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN - FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TINENT - AGAINST A SOVIET THREAT IN THE AREA. PLANS FOR ESTABLISHING A NAVAL BASE AT DIEGO GARCIA FIT INTO THIS PATTERN. FOLLOWING A DECEMBER 1969 NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL DECISION TO PRESERVE A "BALANCE" IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN QUIETLY SELLING PORTUGAL "NON-LETHAL" MILITARY END-ITEMS SUCH AS JEEPS, RADIO SYSTEMS AND SPOTTER PLANES AS WELL AS DEFOLIANTS. IT HAS TRAINED PORTUGUESE OFFICERS IN COUNTER-INSURGENCY AT THE JUNGLE WARFARE ARMY SCHOOL AT FT. GULICK IN THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE AND HELPED IN TRAINING PORTUGUESE PILOTS AT BASES IN WESTERN GERMANY.

"IN A BILATERAL ARRANGEMENT, FRANCE HAS BEEN SELLING ARMS TO PORTUGAL AND SOUTH AFRICA (BRITAIN, TOO, HAS BEEN SELLING WEAPONS TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS DURING THE TORY

GOVERNMENT). THIS MONTH, SOUTH AFRICAN AND FRENCH NAVAL UNITS CONDUCTED JOINT EXERCISES IN THE AREA. RHODESIAN DETACHMENTS HAVE BEEN FIGHTING WITH THE PORTUGUESE IN MOZAMBIQUE AGAINST THE FRELIMO.

"IN THE LIGHT OF THE NEW UNCERTAINTIES EMERGING FROM THE LISBON COUP, ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WILL INEVITABLY RE-THINK THEIR STRATEGIES. INEVITABLY, GENERAL SPINOLA WILL BE THE TARGET OF POWERFUL INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES.

"BUT EVEN IN TERMS OF DIRECT DEALINGS WITH THE REBEL MOVEMENTS, GENERAL SPINOLA FACES SERIOUS PROBLEMS.

"FOR ONE THING, UNLIKE IN THE ALGERIAN SITUATION, THERE IS

NO UNIFIED REBEL LEADERSHIP IN THE PORTUGUESE "OVERSEAS VINCES." SINCE THE 1969 MURDER OF DR. EDUARDO CHIVAMBO MONDLANE, THE TOP LEADER, FRELIMO HAS BEEN RUN BY A POLITBURO GROUP IN WHICH SAMORA MACHEL, WHO WAS MONDLANE'S CHIEF LIEUTENANT, IS THE ONLY CLEARLY IDENTIFIABLE PERSONALITY. VERY LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT OTHERS, INCLUDING FRELIMO OFFICIALS IN CHARGE OF "LIBERATED ZONES" IN MOZAMBIQUE.

"IN ANGOLA, THE REBELS ARE DIVIDED INTO TWO GROUPS: THE NATIONAL FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA HEADED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOLDEN ROBERTO, AND THE POPULAR MOVEMENT FOR THE LIBERATION OF ANGOLA LED BY DR. ANTONIO NETO. A FAIRLY FIRM LEADERSHIP EXISTS IN THE PORTUGUESE GUINEA.

"SPINOLA'S PROBLEM, THEREFORE, IS TO ESTABLISH WITH WHOM HE SHOULD NEGOTIATE AND WHO HAS THE POWER OF DECISION.

"THE JUNTA SEEMS TO HAVE DEFUSED THE DANGER THAT WHITE SETTLERS IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA WOULD PROCLAIM "UNILATERAL DECLARATIONS OF INDEPENDENCE" ON THE RHODESIAN MODEL TO IMPOSE WHITE RULE.

"WHAT GENERAL SPINOLA, THEREFORE, MUST FIRST DO IS TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER HIS "GRADUALISM" APPROACH - HE HAS CALLED FOR A FEDERATION OF THE THREE COLONIES WITH METROPOLITAN PORTUGAL - CAN SERVE AS THE BASIS FOR SUBSEQUENT NEGOTIATIONS, POSSIBLY LEADING TO A FORM OF INDEPENDENCE IN WHICH THE THREE PROVINCES WOULD BE TIED TO PORTUGAL IN THE WAY IN WHICH THE AFRICAN FRANCOPHONE STATES ARE TO FRANCE.

"SPINOLA HAS RULED OUT A CEASEFIRE FOR THE TIME BEING,

BUT DOMESTIC PRESSURES FROM THE NEWLY EMERGENT DEMOCRATIC
PARTIES - FROM CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO THE LEFT - MAY
FORCE HIM TO RECONSIDER HIS STAND AND TRY FOR A DE
GAULLE FORMULA IF HE CAN FIND RESPONSIBLE INTERLOCUTORS
IN PORTUGUESE AFRICA.

"APRIL 25, 1974 IN PORTUGAL MARKS A SIGNIFICANT NEW
BEGINNING FOR THE COUNTRY AND ITS EMBATTLED COLONIES.
BUT A GREAT DEAL OF FLEXIBILITY IS REQUIRED OF THE
JUNTA TO FIND THE PROPER SOLUTIONS AT HOME AND IN AFRICA.
END QUOTE.

2. DEPT IS PREPARING PRESS GUIDANCE FOR USE ON IF-ASKED
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